

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-11

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FM AMEMBASSY KABUL
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INFO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMCONSUL PESHAWAR
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

C O N F I D E N T I A L KABUL 4010

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, PEPR, PK, AF
SUBJECT: PAKISTANI PUSHTUNS REPORTEDLY HAIL NEW REGIME;
AFGHAN PUSHTUNS MAY BE LESS ENTHUSIASTIC

1. SUMMARY. THE AFGHAN PRESS HAS BEEN PLAYING UP THE ENTHUSIASTIC SUPPORT THE SUCCESS OF THE APRIL 27-28 REVOLUTION IS ELICITING AMONG PAKISTANI PUSHTUNS, WHILE INCREASING RUMORS HERE INDICATE THAT AFGHAN PUSHTUNS IN PARTS OF THIS COUNTRY'S EASTERN PROVINCES MAY BE ACTIVELY RESISTING THE "NEW ORDER". END OF SUMMARY.

2. SINCE ITS RESUMPTION OF PUBLICATION ON MAY 4, 1978, THE GOVERNMENT-CONTROLLED AFGHAN PRESS HAS BEEN GIVING EXTENSIVE COVERAGE TO MESSAGES OF CONGRATULATION AND EXPRESSIONS OF SUPPORT WHICH REPORTEDLY HAVE BEEN INUNDATING THE NEW AFGHAN REGIME. PRIME MINISTER NOOR MOHAMMAD TARAKI HAS ALSO REPORTEDLY BEEN MEETING WITH CERTAIN TRIBAL LEADERS WHO HAVE OSTENSIBLY JOURNEYED TO KABUL FOR THAT PURPOSE. PROMINENT AMONG THESE PRESS REPORTS HAVE
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BEEN STORIES DEVOTED TO THE STATEMENTS MADE BY TRIBAL LEADERS FROM THE PAKISTANI SIDE OF THE DURAND LINE IN "PUSHTUNISTAN." TO DATE, THOSE PUSHTUN TRIBES MOST FREQUENTLY CITED BY THE LOCAL PRESS HAVE BEEN: THE UTMANZAI, AHMADZAI, MAHSUDS, DAURS, AND BHITANI OF WAZIRISTAN; THE AFRIDI, ORAKZAI, TURI, AND BANGASH OF TIRAH (NORTH OF WAZIRISTAN); AND, THE UTMANKHEL AND MANY TRIBES OF THE MOHAMANDS NORTH OF THE KHYBER

PASS. A FEW OF THESE PUSHTUN TRIBES, OF COURSE, SPILL ACROSS THE BORDER INTO AFGHANISTAN, BUT IN GENERAL, THE AUTHORITIES HAVE CAREFULLY PINPOINTED TRIBES IN AND NORTH OF WAZIRISTAN ON THE PAKISTANI SIDE. OUR PRINCIPAL SOURCE FOR LOCATING THESE TRIBES IS OLAF CAROE'S BOOK QUOTE THE PATHANS UNQUOTE.

2. COMMENT. WE HAVE NO WAY TO VERIFY THAT MESSAGES OF ANY KIND HAVE, IN FACT, BEEN RECEIVED FROM ACROSS THE BORDER, OR WHETHER TARAKI HAS INDEED BEEN MEETING WITH TRIBAL KHANS FROM THE NORTHWEST FRONTIER PROVINCE (NP). IN THE PAST, HOWEVER, "PUSHTUNISTAN" HAS OCCUPIED A PROMINENT PLACE IN THE KHALQ PARTY'S POLITICAL PROGRAMS, AND IT IS NOT WHOLLY INCONCEIVABLE THAT THOSE TRIBAL LEADERS WHO SUPPORTED THE "PUSHTUNISTAN" CONCEPT WOULD HAVE WELCOMED THE RECENT CHANGE OF GOVERNMENTS HERE. THE PAK-AFGHAN RAPPROCHEMENT WHICH HAD BEEN DEVELOPING UNDER DAOUD, COULD WELL HAVE DISQUIETED SUCH TRIBAL FIREBRANDS, ESPECIALLY SINCE DAOUD'S LAST TRIP TO PAKISTAN PRODUCED RUMORS THAT THE "PUSHTUNISTAN" ISSUE WAS SOON TO BE LAID TO REST FOREVER.

3. THIS ENERGETIC PRESS CAMPAIGN OF THE PAST TEN DAYS COULD, ON THE OTHER HAND, BE LITTLE MORE THAN A PLOY DESIGNED PRINCIPALLY FOR DOMESTIC CONSUMPTION. IN THIS REGARD, WE HAVE HEARD WIDESPREAD REPORTS THAT THE NEW GOVERNMENT IS ENCOUNTERING DIFFICULTIES IN ESTABLISHING ITS CONTROL OVER ITS OWN TOUGH PUSHTUN TRIBES IN PAKTIA PROVINCE AND, PERHAPS, CONFIDENTIAL

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KONAR PROVINCE AS WELL. TRAVELERS TO PAKTIA, BOTH FOREIGN AND AFGHAN, REPORT STORIES THAT NEWLY APPOINTED LOCAL OFFICIALS HAVE BEEN KILLED IN VARIOUS WAYS AND FOR VARIOUS REASONS. THE MILITARY HAS REPORTEDLY BEEFED-UP ITS GARRISONS IN THAT REGION, AND ONE AFGHAN MILITARY SOURCE REPORTED THAT A HELICOPTER HAS BEEN SHOT DOWN WHILE ATTEMPTING TO STRIKE AT AN OBSTREPEROUS VILLAGE. THERE ARE ALSO RUMORS CIRCULATING HERE THAT THE INSURGENTS ARE USING AMERICAN-MADE WEAPONS WHICH POSSIBLY COULD HAVE BEEN SUPPLIED FROM THE OTHER SIDE OF THE BORDER.

4. WE HASTEN TO POINT OUT THAT THIS IS A PARTICULARLY RIPE TIME FOR WILD RUMORS IN THIS CITY. NEVERTHELESS, TALK OF RESISTANCE IN PAKTIA IS CONFIRMED BY WEST GERMAN AID OFFICIALS STATIONED IN THAT PROVINCE. THEY REPORT SEVERAL DEATHS AND MANY HOSPITAL CASES. THE NEW REGIME WOULD APPEAR TO BE ABLE AT THIS TIME TO HANDLE THE CURRENT LEVEL OF TRIBAL UNREST. END OF COMMENT.
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